

SR 24/ I 82 to Keys Road Pilot Project

Transportation Permit Efficiency and Accountability Committee

May 14, 2003

Prepared by: Kerry Grant, South Central Region Project Engineer and
Jason Smith, South Central Region Assistant Environmental Manager

Reviewed by: Don Nelson, Director, Environmental and Engineering Programs

Approved by: Doug MacDonald, Secretary of Transportation

Why are we here today?

Our goal is to report on the SR-24 pilot project including a summary of actions to date, current status of environmental documentation and funding, and plans for the future project delivery.

SR-24 Pilot Project Overview

The primary purposes of the SR 24 project are to: 1. Relieve congestion, 2. Reduce the number of accidents, and 3. Replace the scour critical bridge footings for the bridge over the Yakima River. To accomplish this, the project will widen a 1.56 mile section of SR 24 from 2 lanes to 4 lanes, improve intersection geometrics, and replace the Yakima River Bridge. Environmental issues of this project include salmon habitat protection and enhancement, wetlands, and flood plain enhancement.

The challenge addressed by the Interdisciplinary Team for the SR-24 pilot project is to create best government practices for the purpose of balancing ecological, social and economic values. The project is strategically placed on the landscape to allow a balance of flood risk, economic investment in public infrastructure and ecological restoration. If done cooperatively, the collective government actions would have the potential to enhance thousands of acres of riparian habitat, salmon rearing habitat and wetlands that were removed from the river system in the first half of the 20th century. Governmental entities with an interest in the project include: the Cities of Yakima and Union Gap, Yakima County, WSDOT, Washington State Department of Ecology, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Federal Highway Administration, National Marine Fisheries (NOAA), US Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, Bonneville Power Administration, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission and the Yakama Nation.

Current Status

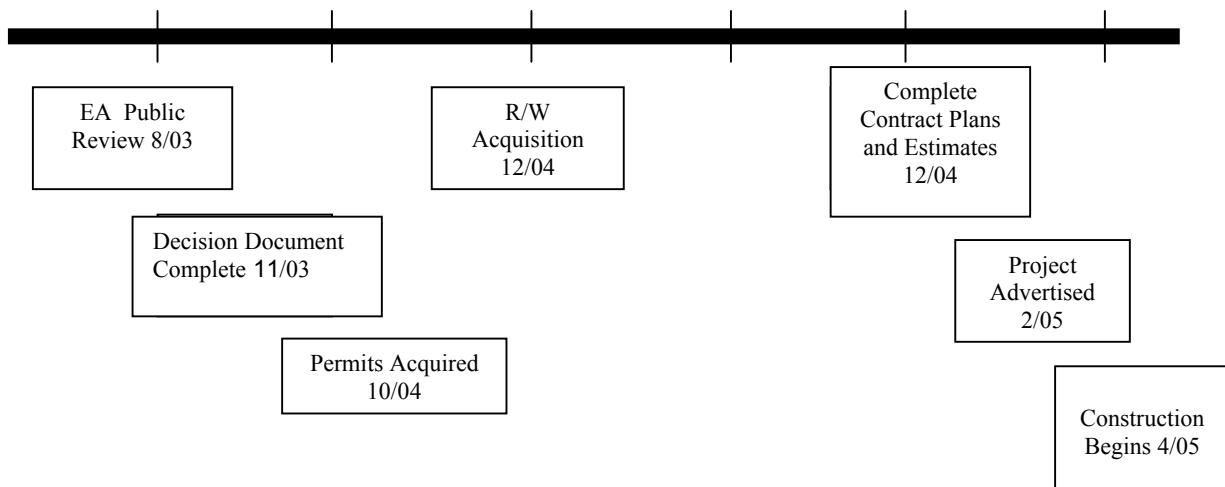
The project Environmental Assessment (EA) under NEPA is scheduled to be completed in August 2003 with a decision document in November 2003. The Floodplain Consistency report was

Where have we been?

- Formed Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) to support discipline reports for the environmental assessment (Spring 2002)
- Released Bureau of Reclamation reach study conducted by University of Montana and Central Washington University (10/02)
- Congressional staff field trip (10/02)
- Completed update of discipline reports, except for floodplain consistency which was a new element added by IDT (12/02)

finalized this month (5/15/03). For the bridge design to move forward, Yakima County must establish new levee locations based on the local floodplain vision. Once this is accomplished, the bridge length can be determined.

This projects is included in the legislature's "Its Your Nickel – Watch it work" project list. Schedule for the project delivery is as follows:



For more information contact Kerry Grant, South Central Region Project Engineer 509-577-1760
grantk@wsdot.wa.gov